

Title: A Search for Meaning | Meaning in the Meaningless
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The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem. “Absolute futility,” says the Teacher. “Absolute futility. Everything is futile.” What does a person gain for all his efforts that he labors at under the sun? A generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. The sun rises and the sun sets; panting, it hurries back to the place where it rises. Gusting to the south, turning to the north, turning, turning, goes the wind, and the wind returns in its cycles. All the streams flow to the sea, yet the sea is never full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again. All things are wearisome, more than anyone can say. The eye is not satisfied by seeing or the ear filled with hearing. What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun. Can one say about anything, “Look, this is new”? It has already existed in the ages before us. There is no remembrance of those who came before; and of those who will come after there will also be no remembrance by those who follow them.
(Ecclesiastes 1:1-11)

I have seen all the things that are done under the sun and have found everything to be futile, a pursuit of the wind. What is crooked cannot be straightened; what is lacking cannot be counted.
(Ecclesiastes 1:14-15)

Pleasure is futile.

I said to myself, “Go ahead, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy what is good.” But it turned out to be futile.
(Ecclesiastes 2:1)

Acquiring is futile.

When I considered all that...I had labored to achieve, I found everything to be futile and a pursuit of the wind...
(Ecclesiastes 2:11)

Wisdom is futile.

So I said to myself, “What happens to the fool will also happen to me. Why then have I been overly wise?” And I said to myself that this is also futile.
(Ecclesiastes 2:15)

Accomplishing is futile.

For what does a person get with all his work and all his efforts that he labors at under the sun? For all his days are filled with grief, and his occupation is sorrowful; even at night, his mind does not rest. This too is futile.
(Ecclesiastes 2:22-23)

For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly, but because of him who subjected it—in the hope that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage to decay into the glorious freedom of God’s children.

(Romans 8:20-21)

But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them as dung, so that I may gain Christ and be found in him...

(Philippians 3:7-9)

There is nothing better for a person than to eat, drink, and enjoy his work. I have seen that even this is from God’s hand, because who can eat and who can enjoy life apart from him? For to the person who is pleasing in his sight, he gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy...

(Ecclesiastes 2:24-26)

Receive life as gift, not achieve life as gain.

Reflection Question: How can you view your life as a gift from God?

Scripture is the CSB unless noted.